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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

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DETAILED ACTION

Double Patenting

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the “right to exclude” granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claims 1,8,15,22,29,and 31 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1,3,4,14,27,40,41,42,53,and 54 of copending Application No. 10/804,550 in view of Karbowski et al (4,663,748).

For claims 1,8,15,22,29,and 31, the claims 1,3,4,14,27,40,41,42,53,and 54 of copending Application No. 10/804,550 disclose a system/method comprising:

a data interface operable to receive data for transmission to a destination node (see claim 1, lines 2 of Patent '50); a buffer operable to store the data; a transmitting unit operable to couple to an optical transmission medium having a plurality of data channels and to selectively transmit optical signals on the data channels (see claim 1, lines 3-6 of Patent '50); and a controller operable to receive a token authorizing transmission on one of the data channels, to generate a transmission control message identifying the destination node and the authorized data channel, to communicate the transmission control message for receipt by the destination node, to transmit the data on the authorized data channel using the transmitting unit after communicating the transmission control message, and to communicate the token to a next node (see claim 1, lines 7-12 of Patent '50);

wherein the controller is further operable to communicate the token to the next node before transmission of the data on the authorized data channel (see claim 3, lines 1-3 of Patent '50);

wherein the controller is further operable to determine whether to delay communicating the token and to communicate the token to the next node after a delay in response to determining to delay communicating the token (see claim 4, lines 1-4 of Patent '50);

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a plurality of optical communication nodes (see claim 14, lines 1-2 of Patent '50); optical transmission media interconnecting the optical communication nodes, the optical transmission media having a plurality of data channels (see claim 14, lines 3-4 of Patent '50); and a plurality of logical tokens corresponding to the data channels (see claim 14, line 5 of Patent '50); wherein each of the optical communication nodes is operable to: receive data for transmission to a destination one of the optical communication nodes (see claim 14, lines 7-8 of Patent '50); receive one of the logical tokens (see claim 14, line 9 of Patent '50); identify one of the data channels associated with the logical token (see claim 14, line 10 of Patent '50); and transmit the data to the destination optical communication node using the identified data channel (see claim 14, lines 11-12 of Patent '50);

receiving data for transmission to a destination node (see claim 27, line 2 of Patent '50); storing the data in a buffer (see claim 27, line 3 of Patent '50); coupling to an optical transmission medium having a plurality of data channels (see claim 27, lines 4-5 of Patent '50); receiving a token authorizing transmission on one of the data channel (see claim 27, line 6 of Patent '50); generating a transmission control message identifying the destination node and the authorized data channel (see claim 27, lines 7-8 of Patent '50); communicating the transmission control message for receipt by the destination node (see claim 27, lines 9-10 of Patent '50); transmitting the data on the authorized data channel after communicating the transmission control message; and communicating the token to a next node (see claim 27, lines 11-13 of Patent '50);

further operable when executed to communicate the token to the next node before transmitting the data on the authorized data channel (see claim 29, lines 1-2 of Patent '50).

Note: (see the claims 1,3,4,14,27,40,41,42,53,and 54 of copending Application No. 10/804,550).

With respect to claims 1,3,4,14,27,40,41,42,53,and 54, the claims 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, and 31 of the copending application number 10/804,555 disclose all the subject matter of the claimed invention with the exception of transmission allocation in a communication network. Karbowiak et al. from the same or similar field of endeavor teaches a provision of the transmission allocation (see column 6 lines 19-27). Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use the transmission allocation as taught by Karbowiak et al. in the communication of the Claims 1,8,15,22,29,and 31 of the copending application number 10/804,550. The transmission allocation can be modified/implemented into the Claims 1,8,15,22,29,and 31 of the copending application number 10/804,550 since Claims 1,8,15,22,29,and 31 of the copending application number 10/804,550 do teach a controller for ring topology. The motivation for using the transmission as taught by Karbowiak et al. in the communications network of Claims 1,8,15,22,29,and 31 of the copending application number 10/804,550 being that it reduces congestion traffic.

3. Claims 1,8,15,22,29,and 31 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1,9,17,25,and 33 of copending Application No. 10/804,528 in view of Karbowiak et al.

Note: (see the claims 1,9,17,25,and 33 of copending Application No. 10/804,528).

Applicant's Claims 1,8,15,22,29,and 31 merely broadens the scope of the claims 1,9,17,25,and 33 of copending Application No. 10/804 by eliminating the elements:

communicate a second token to the next node authorizing secondary transmissions on the authorized data channel. It has been held that the omission of an element and its function is an obvious expedient if the remaining elements perform the same function as before. In re karlson, 136 UPSQ 184 (CCPA). Also note Ex Parte Raine, 186 USPQ 375 (bd. App. 1969); omission of a reference element whose function is not needed would have been obvious to one skilled in the art.

With respect claims 1,8,15,22,29,and 31, the claims 1,9,17,25,and 33 of copending Application No. 10/804 disclose all the subject matter of the claimed invention with the exception of transmission allocation in a communication network. Karbowiak et al. from the same or similar field of endeavor teaches a provision of the transmission allocation (see column 6 lines 19-27). Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use the transmission allocation as taught by Karbowiak et al. in the communication of the claims 1,9,17,25,and 33 of copending Application No. 10/804 The transmission allocation can be modified/implemented into the claims 1,9,17,25,and 33 of copending Application No. 10/804 since the claims 1,9,17,25,and 33 of copending Application No. 10/804 do teach a controller for ring topology. The motivation for using the transmission as taught by Karbowiak et al. in the communications network of the claims 1,9,17,25,and 33 of copending Application No. 10/804 being that it reduces congestion traffic.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1,3,7,15,17, 21, 22, 24, 28 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Asano (U.S. Patent No. 6032185).

- With respect to claims 1, 15, 22, and 29, Asano teaches an optical node (e.g. stations in fig. 1) comprising: a data interface operable to receive data for transmission to a plurality of destinations (e.g. block 25, 23, 29 30 in Fig. 2); a buffer operable to store the data (e.g. buffer 26 in fig. 2); a transmitting unit operable to couple to an optical transmission medium having a plurality of data channels (e.g. the line 11 in fig. 2) and to selectively transmit optical signals on the data channels (e.g. line 11 in Fig. 2); and a controller operable to receive a token authorizing transmission on one of the data channels (e.g. the control unit 31 in fig. 2), to determine a transmission allocation (e.g. block s607 in fig. 6), wherein the transmission allocation represents an amount of time that the authorized data channel may be utilized to transmit the data (e.g. block 337 in fig. 12), to determine a destination allocation (block 331 in fig. 12), wherein the destination allocation represents a proportion of the transmission allocation that may be utilized to transmit the data to a particular destination, and to transmit the data on the authorized data channel in accordance with the transmission allocation and the destination allocation (e.g. when the token receives at step s505 for time to transmit).

- With respect to claims 3, 17, and 24, Asano discloses wherein determining the transmission allocation and determining the destination allocation comprise analyzing topology information associated with an optical communication ring to calculate the transmission allocation and the destination allocation (e.g. Fig. 1 shows the ring).

- With respect to claims 7, 21 and 28, Asano teaches wherein the controller is further operable to generate a transmission control message identifying a destination node and the authorized data channel, to communicate the transmission control message to a next node, and to communicate the token to the next node (col. 4, lines 43-62).

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1,3,7,15,17, 21, 22, 24, 28 and 29 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. See PTO-892.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to PHUC H. TRAN whose telephone number is (571)272-3172. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8-4:30).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, CHI PHAM can be reached on (571) 272-3179. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/PHUC H TRAN/
Examiner, Art Unit 2616